

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 CU-02 ACDA-07 IO-13 TRSE-00 /089 W

-----170716Z 070920 /13

R 170007Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4110

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR MPOL CH VN PG

SUBJECT: PLA NAVY EMPHASIZES NEED FOR BUILDUP

1. ON MARCH 14 NCNA GAVE UNUSUAL PROMINENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE PLA NAVY AND ITS EFFORTS TO REALIZE THE "DESIRE TO LIBERATE TAIWAN AND RECOVER THE NAN SHA (SPRATLY) AND OTHER ISLANDS", THE ARTICLE, PUBLISHED IN HONG KONG'S "WEN WEI PAO", ALSO CALLED FOR SEAPOWERS TO RESIST THE "SUPERPOWERS" 'GUNBOAT DIPLOMACY' AND MARITIME HEGEMONY" AS WELL AS THE SOVIET'S CONTINUING DESIRE TO SUBJUGATE CHINA. THE ARTICLE, CITES MAO'S 1963 DICTUM ON NAVY BUILDING AND REFERES TO A MAY 1975 MAO DIRECTIVE ON STRENGTHENING THE NAVY, WHICH CAME IMMEDIATELY

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AFTER THE SRV SEIZURE OF THE NAN SHAS AND MAY HAVE REFLECTED MAO'S CONCERN OVER THE NAVY'S CAPABILITIES TO DEFEND CHINESE HELD AND CLAIMED ISLANDS.

2. THE "GANG OF FOUR" IS ACCUSED OF THE CRIME OF GOING AGAINST MAO'S DIRECTIVES BY ADVOCATING ONLY AN "ESCORT" OR "RESERVE" NAVAL FORCE. CHANG CHUN-

CHIAO IS ALLEGED TO HAVE ARGUED THAT AS A CONTINENTAL POWER, CHINA DIDN'T NEED A LARGE NAVY SINCE ROCKETS AND MISSILES WERE WELL DEVELOPED AND ANY AREA COULD BE HIT FROM LAND BASED MISSILES. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT WITH THE OVERTHROW OF CHANG AND THE REST OF THE "GANG OF FOUR", THERE IS BETTER HOPE OF BUILDING A STRONG NAVY TO PROTECT CHINA'S LONG COASTLINE.

3. THE ARTICLE COMES AT THE TIME SRV DEFENSE MINISTER GENERAL GIAP IS LEADING A MILITARY DELEGATION TO MOSCOE AND MAY WELL BE DIRECTED IN PART AT HANOI AS ANOTHER OF CHINA'S PERIODIC REMINDERS THAT IT CONSIDERS ALL THE SOUTH CHINA SEA ISLANDS TO BE PRC TERRITORY. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THAT THE TERM "RECOVER" (SHOU FU) HAS BEEN USED. THIS GOES BEYOND EARLIER FORMULATIONS SIMPLY CLAIMING THE ISLANDS OR SAYING "ALL ISLANDS BELONGING TO CHINA WILL CERTAINLY RETURN TO THE EMBRACE OF THE MOTHERLAND". (NCNA NOVEMBER 28, 1975).

4. THE ARTICLE CAN ALSO BE SEEN AS A PITCH DOMESTICALLY BY THE NAVY FOR A GREATER SLICE OF THE MILITARY BUDGET. THE REFERENCE TO LAND BASES MISSILES MAY INDICATE AN INTEREST IN OBTAINING A NAVAL MISSILE CAPABILITY. IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE RATE OF NAVY BUILDUP WILL SIGNIFICANTLY ACCELERATE OVER THAT OF PAST YEARS. WHILE THE DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP ON THE SIZE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ROLE OF THE NAVY WERE BLAMED ON THE "GANG OF FOUR", DEBATES OBVIOUSLY CONTINUE OVER THE ALLOCATIONS OF CHINA'S LIMITED DEFENSE RESOURCES.
CROSS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY BUILDUP, NAVAL FORCES, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977HONGK02973
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770091-0698
Format: TEL
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770350/aaaabmr.tel
Line Count: 101
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 26ad09b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3082460
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLA NAVY EMPHASIZES NEED FOR BUILDUP
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, CH, VN, PG, PLA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/26ad09b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009